



THE INVASION

—OF—

MARYLAND,

—AND—

OTHER VERSES,

—BY—

SLYTHE TABOR.





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The Invasion of Maryland.

The Shenandoah peacefully;
Flows on its lovely way;
Its placid bosom faithfully
Reflects sweet nature's greenery
This blue arched summer day.
But down the valley flows a stream
That puts fair peace to flight,
An army from whose muskets gleam;
In shattered sparkles morning's beam,
And glints the evening light.
'Tis Early's forces hurrying on
To pierce the nation's heart,
To strike defenseless Washington
Whose hosts by fatal chance have gone
Wide as the winds apart.
From out these marchers one we choose,
Lieutenant Ashley was his name,
His faded diary to use
As subject to the pitying muse,
To sing the soldier's fame.

"New Market, Va., July 1st, 1864."

"Through Edinburg, from daylight start;

An hour's rest from our tramp;

Past High Bridge, where the minnows dart;

Through Woodstock, tired and sick at heart

We wearily encamp.

"Next day through Strasburg; straggled down,

And found a dinner ripe;

That night encamped near Middletown;

Next day through Newtown, Kerntown, Milltown,

All of the dear old type.

"Through Winchester we marched, and camped

Near Burksville; and next day,

Round up though hungry, tired, and cramped:

In Martinsburg mid plenty ramped,

The Yanks had run away.

"All tired we rest, and then move out

To break the road, and find

If any Yankees were about,

Or Sigel running from the rout

Had left more spoil behind.

"July the Fifth, we form in line

And charge; the foe falls back;

Now plenty reigns, the day is fine,

We all draw coffee, candy, wine.

Nor other rations lack.

“Potomac river next we sight,
And wade at Shepardstown;
Near Sharpsburg tented for the night;
The soil of fierce Antietam's fight
Yields onions and renown.

“Some troops charged on a liquor store
And lots of 'em got full,
Then orders strict, and guards galore;
At whisky rations I'd before
In three years but one pull.

“July the Sixth, draw one month's pay;
No use to any here;
“Confed ” won't go, these people say;
We ham, and coffee draw to-day;
Then march, full of good cheer.

“Made Maryland Heights, eleven o'clock,
Artillery fire all night;
The front lines bear the battle shock,
While from the hostile walls of rock
The bursting shells alight.

“At daylight start, we in reserve;
Sharp fighting to the front,
Shells drop so near the ranks will swerve
Although the the boys be men of nerve
Out on a Yankee hunt.

"Past Harpers Ferry in the dark;
Then over mountains crossed
To Rollersville, the time we mark
Is two A. M. rain pours, dogs bark,
Rough road, and Captain lost.

"July the eighth, and morning clear;
The Captain in, nigh caught,"
Three men marked "Thief" are drummed round
here,
'Tis done to render thieving dear;
We next to town are brought.

"Through Labb we pass; then straighten out;
We put to guard the rear;
The enemy dashed our trains to rout,
We showed him, that with rebs about
He must not interfere.

"Crossed Blue Ridge, marched to Middletown;
Then countermarch and camp
Through awful rain, and all wet down.
Was sent to spring amid the drown;
Wade creek, and mile to tramp.

"July the ninth; and morning fair;
To town; stacked arms; Black mail
Full sixty thousand dollars there
(We needed all the Yanks could spare;)
In cash we raised, no bail.

“At Frederick may fight to-day;
We find no “Secesh” here;
The people scared and keep away,
Not even the girls have aught to say,
Not like our own so dear.

“Made Frederick city, Yanks fall back,
To Monocacy to fight;
We in reserve did not attack,
But lay close by, to take their track
And follow on their flight.

“Then countermarch through Frederick;
A handsome, wealthy place;
So Jubal thought, and acted quick
A quarter million plum to pick
With courtly Southern grace.

“July the tenth; a daylight start;
We in the front move on;
A pistol find; the pace is smart;
The people scared, as light of heart
We press toward Washington.

“July eleventh; by dawn in line;
The rations full and good;
With butter, sugar, coffee fine,
And meat, and bread, we rebels dine
As victor rebels should

“To Georgetown we may get to-day,
Our cavalry is there;
The bugles sound, the fifers play,
The Capitol five miles away
Gleams in the summer air.

“Surrender is our stern demand;
We give them seven hour's grace;
Abe Lincoln cannot make a stand;
This daring raid by Early planned
Is sure to get the place.

“And still we on to Richmond hold;
July the twelfth, and clear;
I wash and mend my raiment old,
And draw new shoes, and spruce up bold
For our grand entree near.

“We'll have to take the place to-night,
Or else get out of this;
I do not know the programme quite:
But these potatoes are all right,
And these I will not miss.

Hastily gathering the forces available
Brave Wallace imbued with a patriot ecstasy,
Met the strong rebels, whose host unasailable
Wasted a day at the bridge of Monocacy.

Precious hours that gave time for Wright and for
Emory
To bring their brave comrades, and safety to
Washington;
Time for Hunter, and Crook to threaten the
enemy;
And scare Early off from the prey he swooped
down upon.

“At sundown took back track for home,
And traveled till the dawn;
Through Rockville tramped, and ate our pome
Afar from Washington's proud dome
Upon this meadow lawn.

“July the thirteenth, all day rest;
And then through Booneville go;
Then up Potomac twelve miles pressed,
At daylight waded for the west;
Stop near a fountain's flow.

“Cook two day's rations near the spring;
And then we count our gains;
One thousand prisoners we bring,
And herds of cattle on our string,
And horses for our trains.

“July sixteenth to twenty third;
We march, and fight the foe;
Each day artillery is heard,
And when to form we get the word
The Yankees break and go.

“At Ashby’s Gap got this man’s book,
Found on the battle field;
On Strasburg heights position took,
All day we lay awaiting Crook;
Our stores small rations yield.

“To-day the army all move out,
On rations very short;
At Newton found the Yanks about;
We charged and put them to the rout,
They didn’t like the sport.

“Through Winchester the Federals fled,
We win a victory;
Though some are wounded, some are dead,
Whilst we alive are but half fed,
Gaunt our commissary.

“I get a canteen, haversack,
Some crackers, and a sponge;
A saddle, and a good knapsack;
The saddle left the charger’s back
At the rider’s fatal plunge.

“From twenty fifth to August six
March, countermarch and fight;
Our company all gone to sticks,
But thirteen left to fight the ticks,
And all in sorry plight.

“We start at daylight once again,
File left through Williamsport;
Across Potomac in the rain;
Run from the Yanks with might and main,
And tired of this sport.

“The eighth, and clear, a letter came
From a dear Yankee maid;
Am glad to spell her dainty name;
Her rebel friend she don't disclaim;
To cheer him not afraid.

“The ninth to eleventh; to hospital
Take Russell; march through Winchester;
So hot, and rations very small;
Draw pay, but rather than it all
A clean shirt would prefer.

“Past Sulphur Springs; the Yankees dash
To get our trains; they run;
And then just as we cook our hash
They come again; quick as a flash
We form and stop their fun.

Then Grant sent his general valiant and soldierly,
Phil Sheridan trusty, to meet the emergency,
Who changed the confusion to discipline orderly;
With genius transcendent wrought strength
from the urgency.

His campaign now opens; the armies maneuvering;
The Union battalions, and forces Confederate;
Hither and thither each host reconnoitering,
With strategical cunning to strike or procrastinate.

"Tis awful hot, our generals guard
The springs; and make the men
Drink from the creek, 'tis pretty hard;
You'll think of this, ye battle scarred
When peace comes round again.

"In line of battle take our place;
Artillery, and musket fire
Towards our right, that way we face;
They try to get round to our base,
And so we must retire.

"The twelfth; take road, to Strasburg go,
And straight fall into line;
They're bound to fight us yes or no;
Well, here we are a willing foe
To meet their brave design.

“I wish they'd give us chance to cook,
And come some other time;
But when the pot is on the hook,
Comes Custer, Averill, or Crook
And then we have to climb.

“The Thirteenth; get to Fisher's Hill;
Great breakfast on hot corn;
Sharp fighting all around us still;
The Strasburg hights their columns fill,
So gay we look forlorn.

“Then in a hurry they retreat;
We know not what they mean,
Unless 'tis General Longstreet
In our behalf has come to meet
This raid, and change the scene.

“The fourteenth; ordered out to right
On reconnoissance, we
Through Strasburg march on to the height,
Where sharpshooters are taking sight;
Support artillery.

“The sixteenth; sultry; drizzling rain;
Go bathing in the stream;
All quiet, home thoughts fill the brain;
It may be that 'tis all in vain
Of absent ones to dream.

“Next sweetest to the thought of friends
Is that night forlorn hope
Of linen clean that fancy sends,
Or in some sort to make amends,
A bar of common soap.

“Old Jeff is surely short on shirts,
And soap’s beneath his thought;
Our clothes come in such scanty spurts,
And washing without soapsuds hurts,
And soap cannot be bought.

“The seventeenth, clear, put in command
Of road guard for the day;
To Kernstown march, file left, take stand;
Then charge the Yanks in manner grand,
And drive them all away.

“Through Milltown, and to Winchester
We fought and drove them on;
Was hit on knee; spent ball; don’t care;
Found out the bruise when searching there
A lousing raid upon.

“For water, just as we went in
Tom Stuart had been sent;
Got back in time to see us win,
And that cool draught that filled my skin
Down to my heart strings went.

“To hospital to see McRae;
Not doing very well;
His wound is sore, and as he lay
Is out of heart: Longstreet's to-day
Go through, I hear them yell.

“Pistols don't pay, Jeffs' ordnance charge
For cartridge is too much;
A quarter each is quite too large,
We can't shoot Yanks without a marge,
In scalp money, or such.

“The twentythird; by Bunker Hill
Across the country take;
Near Smithland Yanks intrenched, and still;
Sharp skirmish; then our lines we fill,
And out of that they make.

“Next morning firing still keeps on,
We move out in the rain
To Charleston; find the Yanks had gone;
Next day 'twas clear; and then anon
We clean up arms again.

“Towards Lee town start, day hot and clear;
The Yanks in ambush lay,
Confuse us with artillery near;
The fight a short one, but severe;
When they at last give way.

"As skirmishers went Wharton down
Then next came our brigade,
And drove them on by Shepardstown,
Where Gordon charged our fight to crown;
The Yanks the river wade.

"'Tis said the foe was cavalry
And nigh ten thousand strong;
'Tis Sunday and to rest we're free;
Have pineapples and preaching, we,
Think luck has come along.

"But while we eat, the word "Fall in"
Takes from the wicked, rest;
Now all is bustle, mid the din
Of camp, we quite forget the sin
The preacher's words impressed.

"The twenty ninth; for weal or woe
'Tis said this day is fraught.
Convention day at Chicago;
The Democrats in conclave go,
May help us and may not.

"Inspection; put on ordnance board;
On picket for the night;
My sister's letter; how I hoard
Each phrase as gold, its words afford
A mine of dear delight.

“She's faring well in Yankee care,
Oh; when will come the peace?
My hands could beat the sword I wear
This moment to a bright plough share,
And all this strife should cease.

“September first to seventh; gets cold;
Each day we march and fight ;
'Tis plain to see as we grow old,
The Yankees have a leader bold
Who works us day and night.

“'Tis said Atlanta has gone up;
Sad tidings this and grim ;
It helps to fill our bitter cup;
If so distasteful be a sup,
Oh! what when it shall brim?

“September tenth; and raining fine;
This morning up at three;
Attempt to go on picket line.
But had to give up that design,
So dark we could not see.

“The thirteenth; clear, and very cold;
We put in line; quite near
Hot firing to our right; next told
To cook the two day's rations doled,
Then gruff “Fall in” we hear.

"Artillery firing on our right,
I hope were going back;
Severe campaign; and worn outright;
Fatigue, and lice, and rags, and fight,
While food and sleep we lack.

"Two blankets have to do three men;
At the fire take turn or freeze;
Colonel and Major sick, and then
Our company scarce numbers ten;
We'll quit if God so please.

"Fourteenth still rain; no papers; queer,
Hear Petersburg is lost;
If men they lack why keep us here;
The Yanks are playing us, I fear
We'll find it to our cost.

September fifteenth; skirmish drill;
Ramseur and Gordon gone;
And we are put to guard the mill;
Would start to-day had I my will
Our homeward journey on.

"Seventeenth; turns clear; at seven relieved;
Hot skirmishing quite near;
Bought a clean shirt; new clothes received;
Take bath in creek, and feel reprieved
From blues, and gloomy fear.

“The eighteenth; clear, men ordered out;
Forgot ’twas Sabbath day;
Then go to preaching, hear about,
The work of Faith, the sin of doubt,
God’s love to those who pray.”—

Ah; weary one no longer roam,
The time of your discharge is nigh;
All vainly yearn the hearts at home;
Unheeded mid the battle’s foam
And scattered ranks, you fall and die.

He has written his last, this faithful subordinate;
His marching has reached its foreordered terminus;
The Sabbath’s presentiment this day must corroborate;
A flicker of light on the clouds black and ominous.

For this soldier dead; is the battle of Opequon,
Thrilling the land like the blare of the trumpeter;
Victoriously shouted by valorous Sheridan,
“Then we sent the enemy whirling through Win-
chester.”

MEMORIAL DAY.

Years twenty-five have passed away
Since peace was conquered by the men
For whom we keep Memorial day,
An arch of triumph crowned in May
With all the flowers that blossom then.

At that far time those spared by fate
Took in full ranks the homeward march,
And ever since in honored state
The van files through the trophied gate,
May's floweradorned triumphal arch.

For 'tis a triumph to have fought
In that grand army of renown,
To fire the grateful Nation's thought,
And for the deeds of valor wrought,
Receive affection's floral crown.

We greet them as they onward go,
And wreath them each Memorial day;
Pathetically does Time bestow
A trophy from the vanquished foe.
He crowns the men in blue with gray.

Our hearts exult, though tears will fall
As we behold this annual scene;
The thinning ranks that heed the call
That guides them through the portal'd wall
To silent camps and tents of green.

1891

Another year has stolen by,
And still the army moves apace,
The leading ranks fade from the eye
Through that strong portal rising high
Past which e'en love must lose the trace.

And many thus have passed from sight
As last year's ceaseless movement sped,
Some followed Crook that name of might,
Whilst others as they used in fight
Have marched away by Sherman led.

ONE OF THREE.

THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF GEN. SHERMAN

This one of three; and such another three
The world knows not, Should one of master mind
And perfectly informed trace back the broad
And royal road of history, the main
Highway along which sweep in pageantry
Magnificent time's chief events, that move
Still upward toward the crowned and final heights
Of ununiversal righteousness, and love's
Enduring peace; and should the wise man mark
The leaders and defenders, names of note,
The providential men, fore-ordered guides
To lead the way in troublous times;—among
Them all he seeks but cannot find a three
Like this, of trusted, manly men to whose
Sure hands the reins of military power
Supreme were given, without a fear were given;
This single-hearted triad brave and true—
Grant, Sheridan, and Sherman—time cannot
Disjoint their unity, nor can we think
Of one of them without the other two.

Their great achievement was to save and guard
The constitution and the unity
Of this fair land; a grander, harder task
Than was the fight for Magna Charta, when
Our liberties were first confirmed; even as
The peerless Mississippi's wayward flood,
Incessant movement, and insistent power
In native grandeur overtops the state
Of that sweet brook that sang at Runnymede.
Now he who tarried later than the rest
Has gone to join the comrades waiting him.
'Tis fittest so; for long as fame endures
Will each of these be counted—One of three.

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